
Air Force Officials Deliver First C-130 to Polish Military

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American and Polish airmen delivered the first of five refurbished C-130E Hercules military transport planes and spare parts March 24, 2009 to the Polish air force at Powidz Air Base [AB], Poland.

It is a great day for them to celebrate the arrival of the Hercules. It is vital to them being able to—own their own—organically pick up and go,” said Air Force Major General William A. Chambers, the U.S. Air Forces in Europe Director of Air and Space Operations. They are one of our allies who are very willing to go, he said. Whether it is Afghanistan or Iraq, they’ve been alongside the Americans in both fights. The ‘Herc’ is a great symbol of the American-Polish partnership, and we’re grateful to be alongside them.

Polish visitors and media view the first of five refurbished C-130E Hercules military transport planes and spare parts delivered March 24 to the Polish air force at Powidz Air Base, Poland. (U.S. Air Force photo/Capt. Tony Wickman)



It was a sentiment echoed by Polish Brigadier General Tadeusz Mikutel, the 33rd Air Base Commander.

This is a milestone for our air defense. The plane is able to carry 17 tons of equipment or 90 equipped soldiers. That is why the plane will leave (our) CASA [Construcciones Aeronáuticas, S.A.—Spanish Company] planes behind, General Mikutel said.

Also on hand for the celebration were Stanislaw Komorowski, Poland’s Vice Minister of Defense; Polish Lieutenant General Andrzej Blasik, Commander of the Polish air force; Pamela Quanrud, the Deputy Chief of Mission for the American Embassy in Warsaw; and several Polish military and local government authorities.

The new plane expands the Polish air force’s ability to transport troops and equipment, while providing support for evacuation and humanitarian operations. Its presence in the Polish fleet will also increase their interoperability with other air forces because the C-130 is used by several nations around the world, to include NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] allies.

The C-130 received an escort to Powidz AB by F-16s from the Polish air force when it neared its final destination and performed two flyovers of the gathered crowd to showcase the newest addition to the Polish inventory. Upon landing, both the American and Polish crews were recognized for the achievement.

I think we can accomplish a lot of missions to deliver cargo to our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, said Polish Sgt. Andrzej Kozera, a C-130 flight engineer.

The Reserve aircrew from Hill Air Force Base [AFB], Utah and an active-duty loadmaster from Edwards AFB, California picked the plane up in Waco, Texas with their Polish counterparts after its refurbishment and flew it across the Atlantic, stopping at Ramstein Air Base. It made its final leg to Powidz Air Base, where it will become part of the 14th Lift Squadron.

The entire project, including total refurbishment of five aircraft, support equipment, supplies, training, and contracted logistics support, is valued at \$120 million. The donation is a result of an American pledge to provide Poland with such a capability and is fully funded through bilateral military assistance grant money.

The delivery of the five modernized and upgraded aircraft is scheduled to be complete in the summer of 2010.